

ENO RIVER STATE PARK

PARK PROFILE

PARK PURPOSE STATEMENT

Efforts to establish a state park along the Eno River began in 1965 in response to the City of Durham's proposal to build a reservoir in the river valley. A group of concerned citizens led a campaign to save the Eno and formed the Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley. The Association proposed establishment of a state park, and in May of 1972, the State Board of Conservation and Development approved the idea. Durham subsequently dropped its efforts to construct the reservoir, and in August 1973, the first land for the park was acquired with assistance from the Association and The Nature Conservancy. Much of the park is now a Dedicated Nature Preserve.

With its abundance of pools, riffles and rocky bars, the river itself is the most significant biological feature in the Eno River State Park. Along with the diversity of aquatic habitats, the relatively undisturbed vegetated corridor provides excellent protection for the water quality of the Eno River. As a result of these unique features, a number of rare animals are found within the park, including the Atlantic pigtoe (Fusconiamasoni), Neuse River waterdog (Necturus lewisi), and Roanoke bass (Ambloplites cavifrons).

Numerous heath bluffs occur along the Eno River and are particularly unusual because of the dominance of Catawba rhododendron (Rhododendron catawbiense), which is typically found at high elevations in the mountains. At least one regionally rare species, the redback salamander (Plethodon cinereus), is associated with these heath bluffs. The park also contains fairly extensive tracts of hardwood forests typical of those that once covered most of the Piedmont. A wide variety of upland wildlife species inhabit these forests. Unfortunately, large blocks of hardwood forest are very uncommon in this part of the state and are becoming increasingly rare. The forests and other habitat areas within the park are connected to other protected lands, including the Camp Butner and Falls of the Neuse Game Lands, by the unbroken Eno River corridor.

Eno River State Park is an important recreational resource. The linear park offers easy access, particularly for visitors from increasingly urban areas nearby. The park's many and varied recreational opportunities include hiking, canoeing, backpacking, picnicking and fishing. The river and park lands contain resources ideal for environmental education activities and interpretation of the area's rich cultural heritage.

The park preserves and protects the varied scenic resources of the narrow and steep-walled river valley. Outstanding scenic views include river bluffs, whitewater rapids, quiet meanders, rock outcropping, rolling landscapes, historic mill sites, wildflowers, flowering shrubs and woodlands dominated by pine, cedar, maple, dogwood, oak and hickory.

The Eno River valley is rich in cultural resources. The Eno River and surrounding lands were home to widespread American Indian civilizations. A Siouan tribe named Eno and the Shakori tribe shared this river valley in harmony. These tribes eventually merged into one nation at the end of the 17th century and settled near the present location of Durham. The Occaneechee tribe lived along the river in the late 1600's and early 1700's. The Eno River has also been an important part of commerce for European Americans since the 1750's when settlers began moving to the area from northern states. There are a number of old mill sites along the river, of which Synnott's Mill is the oldest. The most outstanding mill is the John Cabe Mill, built in 1779. In addition, William Few's Mill (c.1758), Holden Mill (c.1820), Berry Public Mill (c.1850) and Berry Private Mill (c.1854), among others, are located along the river. As would be expected, old homesites and cemeteries are found throughout the Eno River Valley.

Within this part of the Piedmont, the narrow, steep-walled Eno River Valley has frequent outcropping and numerous rapids and is a unique feature on the landscape. These geological features result from the predominance of metamorphosed volcanic rock that is more resistant to erosion than other types of rock in the area. Since there is no evidence of ancient volcanic vents, the metamorphosed volcanic rock within the Eno River State Park may have erupted from faulted areas known as fissures that were active periodically for millions of years.

Eno River State Park exists so that its valuable biological, recreational, scenic, archaeological and geological resources will be protected. The Division of Parks and Recreation is charged with preserving these values and providing experiences that promote pride in and understanding of this treasured natural heritage.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

River Basin Ecology: The Eno River watershed is part of the Neuse River Basin. Program topics in this theme area include biological diversity, habitat diversity and water quality. Interpretive programs focus on the aquatic life in the Eno River watershed and how this life serves as an indicator of water quality. Through environmental education programs such as the park's EELE, park staff encourage thoughtful stewardship by helping participants realize their effect on water quality. Due to the popularity of river ecology programs, park staff would like to expand the current EELE to include more grade levels and more diverse activities on water quality.

Cultural History: This theme highlights the area's human history with emphasis on the colonial period and late 1800s—in particular, mills, mill sites and milling families on the Eno River. Other historical programs deal with American Indian groups such as the Eno as seen through artifacts found in the river basin.

Wildlife Habitats and Corridors: As development continues in Orange county, few examples of large contiguous forest remain. When habitat is fractured by roads, shopping malls and subdivisions, many wildlife species such as the black bear are unable to meet their needs for food, water, shelter and space. Without forested corridors or travelways, wildlife populations become disconnected and genetically unstable. Interpretive programs in this theme area demonstrate how the park provides large blocks of forested habitat as well as corridors that connect diverse populations.

Unique Geologic Features: Lying within the Carolina Slate Belt, the park contains many unique geologic features, such as old volcanic mud flows at Cates Falls and spherulites—crystal clusters in a rhyolite lava flow—along the Bobbitt's Hole Trail. The falls and rapids in the Eno River are caused by metavolcanic rocks that are very resistant to erosion. With the addition of the Occoneechee Mountain Natural Area and nearby quarries, park staff have increased opportunities for geological programming.

STATISTICS

Visitation (1999)	272,384
Operating Budget (FY 98-99)	\$ 309,979
Revenue (FY 98-99)	\$ 4,541

VISITOR FACILITIES

Primitive camping (5 sites)
Picnic areas (2) and shelter
11 Hiking trails (18 miles total)
Boat/canoe access

Primitive group camping (1 site)
Drinking water
River fishing
Park office

CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION NEEDS

1	The dam removal study will examine the dam at Pleasant Green to determine what should be done to maintain the dam and area or whether (and how) the dam should be removed.	\$ 51,971
2	The maintenance building/warehouse renovation project will construct a new flammable storage/standard maintenance building, renovate the existing structure as a warehouse, construct a vehicle storage building and provide chain-link security fence, paved parking and a vehicle wash pad.	652,114
3	The horse trail system improvements project (land dependent) will develop approximately 12 miles of horse trail and include paving the access road, improving a creek crossing, improving two river crossings and construction of trailer parking, one foot bridge on ridge trails, and signage.	381,158
4	The pumpstation, Cabe Lands, and Pleasant Green access development project includes 200 ft. of access road, gate, bus and car parking, 2 seat Romtec vault toilet, trail development and interpretive displays at the pumpstation. A 1-seat Romtec toilet will be added at both Cabe and Pleasant Green. A canoe launch, gate, paved parking and signage will be constructed at Pleasant Green.	379,950
5	The Piper-Cox House project will renovate the historical house and grounds, landscape, construct a Romtec toilet, add parking and create exhibits.	304,588
6	The Lawrence Road Access project (land dependent) proposes development of an access road, gravel parking, canoe launch, signage, gate and exhibits.	119,319
7	The pit privies to vault toilets project will upgrade pit privies at 4 locations to Clevis Multrum toilets. Helicopter transport is included.	103,253
8	The open air camp improvements project (land dependent) includes development of a 2-mile interpretive trail, canoe launch and parking, car and bus parking, open grassy area, 30-person classroom and improvements to the existing lodge.	583,638
9	The Bobbits Hole camping and group camp project will construct an access road to the group camp, campsites, hiking trail access, signage and 2 mulching toilets.	244,005
10	The office additions project will expand the staff area and add a toilet, construct public toilets, add a security system and increase car and bus parking.	415,339
TOTAL:		\$ 3,235,335

DEDICATED NATURE PRESERVE

In January 1995, 1,150 acres of Eno River State Park, including the entire reach of the river that is included in the park's boundaries, were approved by the Governor and Council of State for designation as a Dedicated Nature Preserve. This designation supersedes any areas previously designated as Registered Natural Heritage Areas and provides more stringent rules for use and protection of the dedicated area.

The dedicated lands along the river include high quality examples of both rare and common natural community types. The rare community types are most notable for their small size and scarcity across the landscape; the larger, more common community types are most notable for the presence of mature, well developed vegetation patterns that resemble the historical landscape. These large tracts also provide habitat for animals that require large home ranges. The aquatic habitat is most notable for its role in supporting the park's numerous rare aquatic species, many of which serve as indicators of water quality.

FUTURE LAND ACQUISITION NEEDS

Completion of the Eno River State Park master plan will require the acquisition of 1,169 acres. Of critical importance is to adequately protect water quality, the riverine aquatic habitat and other significant natural areas including sensitive or rare terrestrial communities and species. Preservation of the scenic quality of the river valley is also an important goal, as is providing expanded outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. Equally challenging and important is to develop and maintain a functional wildlife movement corridor.

Mater Plan Total Acreage	3,805 acres
Current Park Acreage	<u>2,678 acres</u>
Acquisition Needs	1,127 acres

2000 STAFF POSITIONS

Permanent		Seasonal		Peak Load	
Park Superintendent II	1	Park Attendant	1	Park Naturalist	1
Park Ranger III	1	General Utility Worker	2	Office Assistant II	1
Park Ranger II	2	Assistant Ranger	1	Park Attendant	1
Park Ranger I	2				
Maintenance Mechanic III	1				
General Utility Worker	1				
Office Assistant III	1				
Maintenance Mechanic I	1				

PROPOSED STAFF ADDITIONS

Permanent		Seasonal		Peak Load	
Park Ranger	2	Assistant Ranger	1		
General Utility Worker	1	General Utility Worker	1		